

Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

Speakers

WALTER WHITE

TOM STEED

Interrogators

MRS. HORTENSE W. GABEL

JAMES DE SANTIS



THE LISTENER TALKS BACK

on

"What's Wrong With College Football?"

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Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?

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The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of views presented.

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

WALTER WHITE—Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. A graduate of Atlanta University, 1916, Mr. White has done post graduate work in economics and sociology. As executive head of the NAACP, he has investigated lynchings and race riots and has written extensively on mob violence in the United States. He has also served on many official and private commissions considering various aspects of the race problem, and was a member of the organizing conference of the U.N., 1945. As a war correspondent for the *New York Post*, he visited the European, Mediterranean, Middle East, and Pacific theaters of operation in 1943-45. The author of two novels, an autobiography and several studies, Mr. White also contributes to many leading American publications, including a weekly column for the *New York Herald Tribune* and eight other dailies.

REPRESENTATIVE TOM STEED—Democrat of Oklahoma; member of the House Public Works Committee. Mr. Steed was born on a farm near Rising Star, Texas, on March 2, 1904. He served as a newspaperman on Oklahoma dailies for twenty years, including four years as managing editor of the *Shawnee News and Star*. In October, 1942, he enlisted as a private in the Anti-Aircraft Artillery, and was released from active duty in May, 1944, with the rank of second lieutenant. During the same year he joined the Office of War Information and served in the India-Burma theater through 1945. Mr. Steed was elected to Congress in 1948 and re-elected in 1950. During his first term and through most of this year, he was a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor.

MRS. HORTENSE W. GABEL—Director of the National Committee and New York State Committee on Discrimination in Housing; former assistant corporation counsel of the City of New York.

JAMES DE SANTIS—President of the Schenectady Real Estate Board.

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Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?

Announcer:

Tonight we welcome you to Schenectady, New York, where we are the guests of the Schenectady Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

This is a unique experience for Town Meeting, for it is not often that we find an organization frankly dedicated to one point of view on a controversial question that is willing to sponsor both sides. Perhaps this accounts in no small part for the remarkable success of the Schenectady Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People during the past three years.

It is a representative and growing membership and is functioning cooperatively with the community. It is credited with having broken down the segregation pattern in public housing in Schenectady and having brought about the employment of colored saleswomen in three of Schenectady's large stores. It received the Thalheimer Award of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for outstanding work during the past year.

And now, to preside over our discussion, here is your moderator, founder and director of America's Town Meeting of the Air, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr.

Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Tonight we want to congratulate the Schenectady Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for having the courage and foresight to sponsor a discussion of both sides of this highly controversial question, "Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?"

This is one of the many programs Town Meeting has presented on the race question. We are fortunate this evening to have two forthright speakers who will present opposing views on this question and two equally frank interrogators who will help us get to the heart of it without pulling any punches. As long as we can substitute Town Meetings for bombs, as a means of dealing with our problems, we're upholding the highest principles of democracy.

We'll hear first tonight from Walter White, the Executive Secretary for the past twenty years of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who is known throughout the world for his work for this association. He's a native of Atlanta, Georgia, a graduate of Atlanta University, and has attained distinction as an author and journalist. In 1949 he made the trip around the world with Town Meeting as a member of our Round-the-World Seminar. So we are happy to welcome back to this platform, Walter White.

Mr. White:

Mr. Denny, of course, I do not contend that either legislation or litigation can by themselves cure any evil. But both of them, and particularly legislation, are among the most potent methods in a democratic society to create public acceptance of the basic principle of democracy; namely, the right of every citizen to live, to work, to play, and to pray as a free person in a free society.

None of us as reasonable and intelligent human beings can or would deny this right to another individual if we honestly believe in democracy. For this reason it

is imperative that our Congress, our state legislatures, and our city governments swiftly and unequivocally enact whatever legislation is wise, effective, and equitable to wipe out now America's greatest menace to unity, health, and national prestige, and that is the ghetto.

Shortsighted Americans used to believe—and, unfortunately for America, some still believe—that this problem is peculiarly and exclusively a domestic one. Those of us who traveled around the world with Town Meeting of the Air two years ago found to our extreme discomfort that this is not true. Wherever we went in white Europe, as much as in non-white Asia and Africa, racial segregation and the failure of our legislative bodies to wipe out artificial lines of demarcation are doing incalculable harm to our national prestige. More than any other thing, it is causing distrust of our sincerity when we as a nation say that we seek a world of freedom for all men.

Governor Dewey found that out recently in Singapore. Every other traveller to Asia and Africa and Latin America since the war has found the same disbelief. This may conceivably cost us our own freedom. Our atom bombs and our production lines by themselves cannot save us if we lose the support and the raw materials from areas of the earth where dark-skinned people laugh at Americans when they talk glibly about freedom but insist that the ghetto pattern of life for minorities shall continue.

For these and other sound and unanswerable reasons, it is my reasoned conviction that we as Americans should immediately stop academic and petulant discussion of how democracy is to be edged

up to. Instead, we had better begin now to practice the democratic living or else we shall perish.

Antidemocratic forces in the United States have used a particularly evil red herring to perpetuate the ghetto. They argue that entrance of minority groups—especially of Negroes—into hitherto racially homogeneous neighborhoods destroys property values. This just isn't so.

Some years ago, I made a study in Chicago of what happened when Negroes purchased or rented houses in what had been previously an all-white neighborhood on the South Side. The new owners were forced to pay thirty to sixty per cent higher purchase prices than had been charged to whites. Negro renters were obliged, because of the inexorable law of supply and demand, to pay increased rentals over those charged to white tenants. Landlords, meanwhile, asked and obtained lower tax assessments on the specious ground that values had been lowered by entrance of Negroes into the area.

Much less money was spent on maintenance and repair. Six-room apartments were split up into six one-room apartments whose combined rentals totaled from four to five times that of the original apartment under white occupants. As a result, the income on the investment jumped to between twelve and twenty per cent as against an original income of four to five per cent. I ask Mr. Steed by what law of economics a doubling, a trebling, or even a quintupling of return on an investment lowers the value of that investment.

One of the major tragedies of the ghetto, from which escape is often met by violence, as we saw in Cicero, Illinois, recently, is the cost to American society in ill

health, delinquency, frustration, in growing doubts about democracy, and in diminished American prestige the world over. Thus it is imperative that we waste no more time in discussing whether legislation, litigation, public education, or any other method is most useful in abolishing now and forever housing or any other form of segregation.

I am firmly convinced that unless we swiftly learn to practice the democracy we say we believe in, there may be no democracy left for the segregated or the segregator. (*Applause*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Walter White. Congressman Tom Steed, Democrat of Oklahoma, was born on a farm near Rising Star, Texas. For twenty years he served as a newspaperman on Oklahoma dailies. He served in the last war as an anti-aircraft officer and later as a member of the OWI in the India-Burma-China theater. He represents one of the most varied and productive districts in the state of Oklahoma. We are happy to welcome to Town Meeting, Congressman Tom Steed of Oklahoma.

Congressman Steed:

Mr. Denny, I think Mr. White has confessed judgment for my view in his very first sentence. Our question is, "Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?" I say it cannot. Mr. White said, and I quote, "Neither legislation nor litigation can by themselves cure any evil."

As to his claim that entrance of minority groups into previously segregated areas does not hurt property values, I am sure every member of this audience is aware of many cases where the exact opposite is true. This decrease in

value comes, I think, because such mixing frequently drives away prospective buyers most able to pay.

And now, Mr. Denny, since time is so limited and this subject so big, I direct my remarks to the narrow field of public housing. When we confine our attention to housing, we narrow the field to that particular housing provided through public acts and public funds. The 14th Amendment of the Constitution and the Supreme Court decision have already fixed the rights of individuals. But in giving one citizen the right to own, occupy, and enjoy any home he can afford, it also gives his neighbor the right to choose likewise. Public interest subject to law is therefore confined to such housing as public monies may build and operate.

We have all types of projects under housing laws already passed. Either we continue to have all types, else I predict federal progress in the field of housing will stop. Congress has not included anti-segregation clauses in housing legislation, not as a matter of condoning segregation, but as a matter of being realistic to the end that peoples of all races can receive help.

When we mention segregation, most people think of the south. This area has the greater problem, but it has no monopoly on race prejudice. I am sure you know as well as I that no law is going to change the minds of southern whites. This area needs housing aid and anyone who sincerely wants to bring about more and better housing for all peoples in the south through public means must know it will be accepted only on a segregated basis.

But what of other areas and other races? Have laws solved their problems? Many states

long since have renounced legal segregation in virtually every field. These sections, particularly in the north, have boasted of their broadmindedness in this field and have pointed the finger of scorn and accusation at the south.

I say legislation has not provided the cure, not even in the north, not even in the case of minority groups other than Negroes, because race prejudice still exists. Illinois and Iowa, for instance, are states that have no Jim Crow laws, yet Illinois has presented us the Cicero case and Iowa that of the Korean Indian war hero who was denied a grave for his mortal remains.

Law or lack of it did not change the hearts and minds of the people of Iowa and Illinois. Law has not forced members of racial groups to remain together such as we see in New York's Harlem. Other forces cause these results, and your answer to segregation, voluntary or forced, will be found in the forces themselves—in the heart and the mind, and not in the law.

Through trial and error, racial groups have found ways to live side by side with a minimum of friction. Try to force an end to this pattern by law, and you defeat what progress has already been achieved through the evolutionary process. Prove anything you like. Pass laws, if you can. But the minds of people will stay the same until a greater force changes them. And until this attitude changes, you will not see intermingling of races in some sections of our land.

The law gives you the right to own a home anywhere, but it cannot compel your neighbor to remain with you, to welcome you, to like you, or to associate with you. (*Applause*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Congressman Steed. Now, gentlemen, unless you have some questions for each other, our special interrogators here are ready with their questions—Mrs. Hortense Gabel, Director of the National Committee and the New York State Committee on Discrimination in Housing, and Mr. James De Santis, President of the Schenectady Real Estate Board. Mrs. Gabel, are you ready with a question?

Mrs. Gabel: Yes, I am. I think first, before I ask my question, we ought to get the legal systems and the fact situations as they exist in this country straight. Congressman Steed, I think, has in some measure confused them. We have states in the deep south, the deep southern Jim Crow states, which compel segregation by law. Then in the overwhelming majority of states, there are no laws which either compel segregation or forbid discrimination. In something like nine states, there are laws which have begun to forbid discrimination in housing.

Now, Congressman Steed, I would like to address my first question to this first situation where you have laws which compel segregation. You have spoken in terms of the hearts and minds of men and the individual's right to do what he pleases. How, in the face of a philosophy like that, can you justify a compulsive sanction decreeing segregation when many southerners do not feel that way?

Congressman Steed: First, let me say I am not justifying or condoning it. I am merely stating it as a fact that exists, and one that must be faced and realized if we are going to do anything in a realistic, practical way to help

these people who need it. Now I think, as I read the recent Supreme Court decisions in reference to the guarantees under the 14th Amendment, that the rights of an individual to own, occupy, and enjoy a home anywhere he wants to, if he has the money to pay for it and can find somebody willing to sell it to him, has been very clearly established. And since that is a matter which has been settled by the highest court in the land, it just seems foolish to me to think that you'd ask for further legislation. To me that settles the thing. That's all there is to it. And no matter how many covenants, restrictive covenants, city ordinances, or state laws that might have been passed—in the light of those decisions of the court, I think they go out the window.

Mrs. Gabel: Well, let's not give that famous Supreme Court case more credit than it deserves. All that case said was that no man could put a written instrument in writing and file it in the hall of records saying that he was going to discriminate. It made no pretenses, Congressman Steed, of saying, "Thou shalt not discriminate."

Congressman Steed: As I read the Court's decision in the Illinois case, it mentions specifically regulations by states and agencies of the states, which would be the cities.

Mr. Denny: All right, thank you. Now our next question from Mr. De Santis.

Mr. De Santis: Mr. White, in many of the smaller communities of America, the problem of segregation isn't acute, and many of the people have not had first-hand experience with it. Now, assuming that there are two housing projects, both of which are iden-

tical in every comfort and facility, and assume that one is solely occupied by Negro people and the other by white people, what are the disadvantages of such an arrangement?

Mr. White: The disadvantages are that it perpetuates a dangerous schism in American thinking and American living. One of the things that has happened in all of these so-called Negro housing projects is that inevitably they are located on the other side of the tracks in the least desirable, the least healthy part of any given city. It's true in the north as well as the south. And second, municipalities spend less money on fire and police protection and sanitation and on other services which make for a decent living.

But finally, we've got to learn and we've got to learn it very fast that two-thirds of the people of this world of ours are not white. White people are in a minority, and there is a social revolution sweeping Asia and Africa and Latin America and the United States because colored peoples are not going to accept any longer the status of second-class citizenship. We either have got to live together in this world as one people in one world or, in my opinion, there isn't going to be any world left for any of us to live in, so that segregation in itself is evil. (*Applause*)

Mrs. Gabel: Congressman Steed, last week, all of us read in the papers of 52 exchange students who were brought here from every corner of the world to study in our American schools and universities so that they could see a working demonstration of democracy. Those students, as part of their orientation before they separated to go to various schools,

were to tour our great pride—the TVA. Two of those fifty students were dark-skinned Panamanians. When these 52 students discovered that they could not live together, they chose not to see TVA. Now, Congressman Steed, as a Congressman with a splendid international record, can you tell me in your opinion what effect that story will have on our battle to win the minds and hearts of men throughout the world?

Congressman Steed: Well, in the first place I don't know about the case you referred to, but I do know that students and other visitors from all over the world have visited TVA time and time again. And during the time that I was in India, which is a country of colored people, I found that innumerable people from India have visited and inspected TVA, and if there is any restriction there that would prevent that, I never heard of it.

Mrs. Gabel: The restrictions involved the housing of these students.

Congressman Steed: Well, these people were housed and fed while they were there, and they seemed to have no difficulty. I never had any complaint from any of them.

Mrs. Gabel: I hate to belabor the subject.

Mr. Denny: Well, do you want to be a little more specific?

Mrs. Gabel: Well, I'm asking the Congressman to answer the one argument he has avoided that Mr. White made in his first speech. How can we justify segregation when we preach democracy and we are attempting to win the minds and hearts of colored and white men throughout the world?

Congressman Steed: Well, since you bring it up, I don't mind tell-

ing you exactly how I feel about that. I'm getting pretty sick and tired—not at you—but I'm getting pretty tired of this thing we hear so much about, these apologists for America who are so scared that somebody in some foreign country just isn't going to approve of us and like us. Now I've traveled over most of the world, and I'll tell you in all seriousness that the most mistreated American citizen, no matter who he may be or where he may be, lives a far better life than the majority of the peoples in the countries I have been in, and all I've got to say to them is, if they are so interested in helping people, why don't they clean up the mess in their own homes before they come poking their fingers toward us?

Now, we've done pretty well under our system. We've become one of the most powerful nations the world has ever known. We've got our sins, of course, but we've had an evolutionary process going on, and we've been making each generation a better one from the one that came before it, and I think that we can make a very good case of showing that in this country we are coping with these problems in equality and we are solving them, which is more than most of these people from foreign countries can say about their countries. And I'll just tell you this. Any leader of a foreign country who is intelligent and well-informed knows that what I have said is true and therefore he couldn't in good conscience criticize us for the things we do, and if he isn't intelligent and well-informed, what difference does his opinion make anyhow? (*Applause*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Mr. White has a comment on that.

Mr. White: Indeed I have. I

have done a little traveling around the world, too. I've been six times during the past seven years to Asia and Africa and Europe and Latin America, and the leaders of other nations don't know the facts as we know them in this country. I wish Congressman Steed himself knew them a little better, then he wouldn't be quite so optimistic. What they hear from America are the stories of the filibusters in the United States Senate; of speeches by men like Talmadge and Rankin; of riots like that one in Cicero; of the bombings of the homes of eighteen Negro families in a period of only about six weeks in Dallas, Texas, which happened this summer. They know about the ghetto, they don't know about the progress, because that is not as widely publicized as it ought to be.

And I want to say this, that the progress is not due to the Congress of the United States. The courts have gone very much farther, and the fighting has had to be made by individual organizations and individuals in this country who, thank God, are much more intelligent than the present Congress, so far as this issue is concerned. (*Applause*)

Now, what difference does it make? There are two things which make America great. One is her declaration of decency and democracy and human freedom represented by the Bill of Rights and our Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation. The other is our phenomenal production lines, our assembly lines. Let's see what would happen to the second of these if we fail on the first. Ninety-six per cent of the manganese with which we make our steel comes from India, Brazil, and the Belgian

Congo. The largest supply of uranium yet found in the world is in the Belgian Congo. Our chrome, our cobalt, our tin, our tungsten, our rubber, our bauxite come from the areas of the earth inhabited by dark-skinned people who don't trust America and don't believe America when she says she is working for freedom for all men everywhere, because the Congress spends time talking about these things and does not put an end to legislation to segregation and discrimination and human degradation. (*Applause*)

Congressman Steed: I'll just tell you one thing. There is one thing America has that these people, no matter what their color, creed, or anything else is, sure like and respect and that's a dollar bill. And whenever there's anything they've got that we want—if we are willing to pay for it we can get it, whether they like us or not. That's the only way we've ever gotten anything anyway and that's the only way we're going to get anything from them in the future. (*Cries of dissent.*) I spent a year in India. Now I know these leaders are aware of the prejudices and the segregations of the caste system and the things that go on there, and they are well aware of those that go on in Africa and in Europe. And I think that those people who feel like they've got to apologize for America ought to do a lot of self-soul-searching.

You know, it's a funny thing. If this country, in all this sin you accuse it of having, is such a bad place, why are so many people throughout the world—colored, if you please—trying so desperately hard to get into this country? (*Applause*)

Mr. De Santis: Mr. White, you

have stated that when Negro families move to an all-white neighborhood, property values do not decrease; however, many people do not agree with you, especially in relation to one-family-house neighborhoods. Assuming that such people are right, what can be done to prevent such financial loss to owners of property in such a neighborhood? If nothing can be done to prevent such a loss to the owners, what should be done to compensate them?

Mr. White: May I say this? When you say Negroes moving in, I would say to you "What Negroes?" Is it going to be Negroes who are loud and noisy and immoral? Of course, they are going to lower the value of property; so would white people who are lazy and immoral and loud and noisy lower the value of property. (*Applause.*) Do you mean to tell me that in any reasonably intelligent, stable, sensible community the moving of Marian

Anderson or Ralph Bunche into that neighborhood is going to depress property values? I just don't believe it. I don't think Americans are quite that stupid. (*Applause*)

On that same issue I want to gently but firmly take exception to what Congressman Steed said, that the minds of southern white people cannot be changed by laws. I have a higher respect for the intelligence and the morality of southern white people than that. They have been changed not only by laws, but also by the threat of laws, as is evidenced by the fact that we've never passed an anti-lynching bill because of filibusters, that even the threat of a law has materially reduced lynching to the betterment of America. The FEPC did the same thing in employment.

Mr. Denny: Thank you very much, Walter White. We'll start with a question from the lady here in green.

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QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Lady: Mr. White, have you any suggestions as to how legislation could affect segregation in private housing?

Mr. White: I have to give you a little background on that. First, they attempted segregation by municipal ordinances and state laws, and the Supreme Court outlawed that. Then they tried restrictive covenants. Now we are up against a very tough nut which I frankly admit is tough, and that is the agreement amounting to a conspiracy on the part of some real estate interests, and some mortgage companies, and some banks in refusing loans to Negroes out-

side of the ghetto or to anybody for houses for Negro occupancy. I think that what we need to do is to define ways of prohibiting the use of capital and the use of credit as a means of perpetuating the ghetto. And second, I think we need educational programs, perhaps this is one of them, by which the nameless fears of so many Americans, both white and Negro, can be destroyed and so that this psychological depreciation of property values can be done away with because it is not a real depreciation of values; that is, through a job of public education which listeners to the Town Hall of the

Air can do a magnificent job in pushing forward.

Mrs. Gabel: I'd like to add a little to that. Nowadays there is very little housing in the United States which is not supported with some government aid. We start with public housing and we go straight away through to federal housing, administration housing, which covers the majority of private housing in this state. We believe that that is one of the legislative and legal levers that can be used to compel democracy, because where federal or local or state public monies are contributed by all the taxpayers, they should go to the benefit of all the consumers.

Lady: My question is for Congressman Steed, and I'd like to ask him if he doesn't feel that there is a tremendous discrepancy between our protestations of equal rights for all and our maintenance of Negroes as second-class citizens.

Congressman Steed: Well, of course you can find people in both races who are far from having what we would consider a suitable way of life in this country. That's the whole point I make. The only way you can help these needy people of any group is through Federal Housing legislation, and what we've been trying to do is to set up laws that will permit us to go into a community and help that community solve its problem the way it wants it solved to the end that these very people we are interested in can get help now—not at some future time, when all these ideologies have come into being. We don't want to condemn another generation of our minority groups to a continuance of the same thing we have found some of them in today.

Mr. Denny: The lady wants to

talk back. You had better stand by.

Lady: Congressman Steed, I don't mean people who are simply needy. I mean people who only want to be treated as citizens, just like everybody else, regardless of what color their skin happens to be.

Congressman Steed: All a law can give anybody is like I think the Supreme Court did in its decision. It gives you the right to own, occupy, and enjoy a home anywhere if you have the ability to pay for it and can find somebody willing to sell it to you. Now if people do not have the ability to pay for a home, you must either give them federal help, or you've got to wait until you can do something about increasing their earning power and giving them the economic wherewithal so they can help themselves.

Man: This goes to Mr. White. What has been the experience in non-segregated housing regarding mutual acceptance of both Negro and white families?

Mr. White: In a remarkable number of instances there has been—oh, they're looked askance at each other at the very beginning, and then they found out a very basic truth—that we are more alike than we are different. And they gravitated toward each other and became friends on the basis of their mutual interests, and there have been remarkable instances of success from integrated housing of that sort. And I'd like to say that that's not anything particularly new in my own experience. I was born, as Mr. Denny said, in Atlanta, Georgia. I lived in a mixed neighborhood in the heart of the south, a good many years ago. As a matter of

fact, we lived so close to the neighbors that actually I as a Negro had a white mammy. You hear a lot about white people having black mummies. I had a white mammy because a neighbor of ours raised me during my mother's illness along with her own son. That is the kind of friendly relationship I mean, and I think one of the reasons I feel as kindly towards white people as I do despite all I have seen as secretary of the NAACP is because I know we can learn to know and respect each other. It can be done and it is being done in a remarkable number of places.

Man: Congressman Steed, granted that legislation will soften up opposition to segregation, do you believe that law enforcement officers would carry those laws out? May we have your opinion?

Congressman Steed: Well, it would be just an opinion. I want you to understand that I have no objection to any community in America having the kind of housing it wants, and if groups are willing to mix together and live, that's all right with me, and I think the law would help permit that and that's all right. Now it's true that if you really know what the attitude of mind is in many of our communities in this country, as I think I know them, I'm sure you realize that the answer to your question is that you can't get people to enforce something they do not believe in, and there are some places just not ready for this sort of thing yet, in my opinion.

Lady: Mr. White, what can any local or city government do to cure segregation in public housing?

Mr. White: Well, they could do what New York City has done. They could pass a city ordinance prohibiting discrimination on the

basis of race, color, religion, or national origin in housing and that has worked in New York City despite the very militant and determined opposition of certain real estate interests and others, but it is working in New York City, Stuyvesant Town to the contrary.

Man: Congressman Steed, if all the American people are taxed for public housing, must not Congress protect the housing rights of all the American people?

Congressman Steed: Of course, and I think Congress does, because if you have studied the program, the way the federal housing laws administer it you will see that in these communities, particularly in the south, they have seen to it that equal help has been given, and in the case of the colored race, they have received a greater proportion of help. And I think that that is brought on by the fact that a larger per cent of that group comes within the definition or scope of the needy group they want to help. And that's the way that they have met that problem down there, by conducting the program in such a way that even though it's in a segregated system, the same type of housing is given in full measure to both groups.

Man: Mr. White, what kind of legislation would you advocate as a cure to segregation and housing, and to what extent do you think the southerners would abide by such legislation?

Mr. White: Well, I would include in every piece of federal housing legislation — this would apply to such agencies as FHA and all other defense housing agencies—an explicit prohibition of discrimination based on any artificial line of demarcation such as race, or color. And second, I believe, and again I repeat I have

a great deal of faith in the people of the south—sometimes shattered, but I still have that faith—I believe that they would be law-abiding citizens and they would abide by the law, even though there would be a few people who would try to evade obedience to the law. And I set as an example what has happened in Congressman Steed's own State of Oklahoma. Ten years or so ago, when the first action was brought into the courts of law to challenge the denial of graduate and professional training to Negroes solely because they were Negroes, there were many people who said the South would never stand for it, but today more than a thousand Negro students are studying in the state universities of twelve Southern states, and Congressman Steed's own son is sitting in a class with Negro fellow students in the University of Oklahoma.

Congressman Steed: I was glad that this matter of the position of the NAACP on housing legislation came up, because I think you would like to know whether that represents the views of all the people who speak for, work for, and say they represent various minority groups in regard to this subject. I don't think you'll find that they are unanimous on it at all. I don't believe anyone would say that Senator Douglas of Illinois was not a liberal and not interested in these people. He took the attitude that we had to have the law that now is, rather than the NAACP attitude, and I'd like to quote from Richard Starcher's book, *The Negro's Share*,

which says that unless we have the law as it now is, the alternative will be no law at all.

Mr. Denny: Thank you very much, Congressman Steed, and all of you speakers, and Mrs. Gabel and Mr. De Santis. Thanks also to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People here in Schenectady, and especially Mrs. Barbara Rumsey, the high-voltage dynamo.

Announcer: One of the men who helped to make this program possible here in Schenectady tonight is not with us. He is a 23-year-old German student who graduated from Union College last June who was brought to this country by the Schenectady Rotary Club in 1945 to receive a college education and to learn something about the American way of life firsthand. Young Herman Nickel of Berlin was not content to simply receive the generosity of the Rotary Club and other benefactors in this city, he wanted to make a contribution; and he chose to work through the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The thing he found most precious about American democracy was the fact that here people could do things about something they didn't like. He was most eager to have Town Meeting originate in Schenectady and he had a hand in arranging this program before he left for Germany two weeks ago. We know that he will do well in his native Germany in advancing the cause of democracy, and we wish him every success.

FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Now that you have read the opinions of the speakers on the subject, "Can Legislation Cure Segregation in Housing?" you are probably ready to draw your own conclusions. In making up your mind, you may want to consider the following important background questions.



1. Do the American people as a whole want segregation in housing ended?
 - a. If so, is legislation necessary?
 - b. If not, can legislation be passed, and if passed, can it be enforced?
 - c. Is segregation inevitable? For example, how can people be kept from moving out of a neighborhood when Negroes move in, thus making it a segregated area again?
 - d. Is the progress being made in integrating the armed services indicative that segregation in housing can be ended just as satisfactorily through legislation?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of homogeneous neighborhoods?
 - a. Are they successful in eliminating tensions?
 - b. Do most people prefer to associate only with their prototypes?
 - c. Does such association cause people to distrust and fear those who are "different"?
 - d. Do homogeneous neighborhoods prevent children from gaining a proper perspective of themselves and the world they live in?
3. What effect does unsegregated housing have on real estate values?
 - a. Does the infiltration of minorities lower real estate values, or have the experiences with public housing shown that this is not always a result?
 - b. If residents of a neighborhood do not want to remain after Negroes move in, and sell out as fast as they can, how can the lowering of real estate values be prevented?
 - c. If minorities were permitted to live in decent homes in decent areas, would they not be just as desirable neighbors as the majority?
4. Why do some people object to unsegregated housing?
 - a. To what extent is their opposition a reflection of insecurity?
 - b. Does this imply that education, rather than legislation, is a better cure for segregation?
5. Does segregated housing weaken our preaching of democracy in other parts of the world?
 - a. What was the effect of the Cicero incident in this country and abroad?
6. Would unsegregated housing mean an automatic end to discrimination, or would the possibility of embarrassment, unpleasantness, and overt acts be more unbearable than segregation?

THE LISTENER TALKS BACK

"WHAT'S WRONG WITH COLLEGE FOOTBALL?"

Program of September 4, 1951

Speakers

Harry Loehlein
Dr. Turck

Tim Cohane
Roger Kvam

Each week we print as many significant comments on the preceding Tuesday's broadcast as space allows. You are invited to send in your opinions, pro and con. The letters should be mailed to Department A, Town Hall, New York 18, N.Y., not later than Thursday following the program. It is understood that we may publish any letters or comments received.

WHICH ABOVE ALL? HONOR . . .

A fundamental axiom of military life and all human contacts should be, and to my knowledge over 44 years of military experience is, that honor supersedes friendship and even relationship. Decisions that are painful beyond belief must at times be made against a friend or even a brother where dishonor is the only alternative.—HORACE W. HELMIRE, Dowington, Pennsylvania.

(Harry Loehlein declared) with self-assurance and to an enthusiastic and applauding American audience, "Yes, if I could be returned to West Point, I would again put friendship before honor."

His repeatedly stated excuse for dishonesty and cheating, his claim to an "honorable" discharge was "friendship"—the aiding and encouraging of a friend in dishonesty, the desecrating of the honor system of a great school. . . . That young man appreciates the *prestige* of honor. He wants an "honorable" discharge, the kind of an "honorable" discharge that would itself be dishonest. . . .

What a conception of friendship

and of honor! I believe he stated he was recently married. I wonder how his bride would accept the immortal "I could not love thee, dear, so much loved I not honor more" . . .

We all understand wrongdoing; it is easy to fall into. But we like to think we can take our punishment without shouting defense of dishonor to our nation. We would like to feel that the boys would be proud of a school that uncompromisingly aligns itself with an understanding of honor and its value. — M. KERR, Los Angeles, California.

It is to be hoped that someone will tell the West Point ex-cadet that he is all mixed up in his values. "Friendship above all" is a poor substitute for loyalty to principle, and until we get that value seared into our thinking, we'll continue to have scandals in government and in the most innocent-appearing athletes. — JENNIE E. MOSS, Kinston, North Carolina.

. . . OR FRIENDSHIP?

Last night's program was worth its weight in the Aga Khan's diamonds. . . .

The de-emphasis of football is

certainly the only answer to the cribbing and such in colleges today. I am 24 years of age, and while I was in college from 1944-1947 I watched, and helped at times, certain students who couldn't make the grade unless they had help. . . . I have seen football players who were trying for engineering degrees and such on the brink of suicide because the pressure was too great. They kept going, though, for the glory of the dear old alma mater who forgot them as soon as someone else came along to take their place. I certainly agree with Harry Loehlein because I would help again as I did before (in a small way) because I, too, value friendship above any "code of honor."—MRS. ROBERT READ, Library, Pennsylvania.

INSEPARABLE

How can (friendship and honor) be separated. . . . Friendship that is not built upon honor is but a hollow gesture and cannot be trusted. — WALTER W. PHILIPP, Sheldon, Wisconsin.

Has the cadet considered what is a friend without honor? Can he be a true friend? . . . For myself, and for most sincere people, I think, a friend without honor is a fraud.—LOUISE E. CLARK, Springfield, Illinois.

When West Point cadets and other college men and women are forced to be disonorable to keep "friends," the time has come for a cram course for everyone on the basic ideals of Americanism and the noble purpose of Christianity. Christian love never required dishonor, and helping others, which is a part of Christian love, can be accomplished without neglecting high ideals. — H. EDISON McDANIEL, Wollaston, Massachusetts.

START OF THE TROUBLE

To my way of thinking, the trouble . . . starts back in high school where the football player receives many advantages over his fellow students, and too many coaches have never learned to be good losers. However, I would like to say that some of the finest friends I have are football players who also made use of their school books.—JACK SOBOSLAY, Duquesne, Pennsylvania.

EDUCATION FIRST

As an ex-varsity basketballer at the University of Tennessee, I know the need (for) athletes to put education first. I also find in this athletic hotbed great need for the recognition of the real purpose of the colleges. — DAN THOMAS, Lexington, Kentucky.

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